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EDITING A FLUID AND UNSTABLE TEXT. THE EXAMPLE OF THE *ACTS OF PILATE* (OR *GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS*)*

The notion of "mouvance" is valid and thoroughly operational for analyzing the textual tradition of the Acts of Pilate*, as it is a fluid and profoundly unstable tradition. By applying the tools and meeting the requirements both of classical philology and of the "New Philology", the editors of the* Acts of Pilate *seek to organize and interpret this complex manuscript tradition, while underscoring the proliferation of variants and the transformative dynamic of the text. However, the current editorial project does not satisfactorily account for the insertion of the* Acts of Pilate *in a collection of texts that can be identified, by and large, as a coherent corpus. The development of certain electronic tools could offer a solution to this difficult problem.*

La notion de mouvance est pleinement valable et opérationnelle pour analyser la tradition textuelle des Actes de Pilate*, qui se caractérise par une grande fluidité et une profonde instabilité. Mêlant les exigences et les outils de la philologie classique et de la « New Philology », les éditeurs des* Actes de Pilate *cherchent à ordonnancer et à interpréter cette tradition manuscrite complexe, tout en mettant en valeur le foisonnement des variantes et la dynamique transformative du texte. Le projet éditorial actuel ne permet toutefois pas de rendre compte de façon satisfaisante de l'insertion des* Actes de Pilate *dans un ensemble de textes avec lesquels il a constitué peu à peu un corpus perçu comme cohérent ; le développement d'outils électroniques pourrait offrir une solution à ce difficile problème.*

The notion of "mouvance", used extensively in Medieval Studies, has yet to penetrate the field of Byzantine Studies. It offers, however, a thoroughly valid and operational strategy for analyzing the textual tradi-

* I would like to thank Albert Frey (Université de Lausane) for his attentive proofreading and Nathanael Szobody (Strasbourg) for his English translation.

tion of the *Acts of Pilate*.[1] Composed in Greek during the 4th century,[2] this narrative was transmitted by a number of witnesses that all testify to a text in a state of constant evolution.[3] So much so, in fact, that while preparing a critical edition for the *Series Apocryphorum* of the *Corpus Christianorum*, the editors have run into problems similar to those encountered by editors of multi-form medieval texts.[4]

After briefly discussing the problems which arise from the fluidity of the Greek manuscript tradition of the *Acts of Pilate*, I will present the editorial choices that have followed a period of trial and error concerning various issues, some of which still remain unresolved. In doing

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1. Concerning this apocryphon, cf. M. Geerard, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*, Turnhout, Corpus Christianorum, 1992, p. 43-46 (s. n. 62); R. Gounelle, "Pilate, Acts of", in *The Oxford Bible Dictionary*, Oxford, 2011, in press. Unless otherwise indicated the title *Acts of Pilate* will refer to the Greek A recension, not to be confused with the Byzantine Greek recension edited by R. Gounelle, *Les recensions byzantines de l'Évangile de Nicodème,* Turnhout/Lausanne, Corpus Christianorum, Series Apocryphorum, Instrumenta 3; Instruments pour l'étude des langues de l'Orient ancient 7, 2008. The references to the *Acts of Pilate* follow the new numbering system established by the research group of the AELAC in its preparation of a new critical edition of the text. The traditional division of chapters and paragraphs is indicated in parentheses and in Roman numerals whenever they are different.

2. The dating of this text's composition is disputed. For a classical view point, cf. M. Schärtl, "*Nicht das ganze Volk will, dass er sterbe*". *Die Pilatusakten als historische Quelle der Spätantike*, Frankfurt a. M., Apeliotes 8, 2011, p. 12-28. For a more critical view point of the ancient witnesses to the *Acts of Pilate*, cf. R. Gounelle, "Un nouvel évangile judéo-chrétien? Les *Actes de Pilate*", in J. Schröter (éd.), *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology*, Leuven, in press.

3. These witnesses are presented by C. Furrer, "La recension grecque ancienne des *Actes de Pilate*", *Apocrypha* 21, 2010, p. 11-30, with a list of their abbreviations. Since the publication of this article, more witnesses have been identified: Meteora, Monastery of the Holy Trinity, 14 (*olim*, Rousanou 12), fol. 1-10v (the *Acts of Pilate* are at the beginning of the manuscript, in a section dated between the XVth and XVIth century by D. Z. Sophanios, *Τὰ χειρόγραφα τῆς μονῆς Ἁγίας Τριάδος*, Athens, Τὰ χειρόγραφα τῶν Μετεώρων 4, 2003, p. 201); Meteora, Monastery of the Holy Trinity, 549, fol. 343-346, XVIIth c. (N. A. Bees, *Τὰ χειρόγραφα τῆς μονῆς Μεταμορφώσεως*, Athens, Τὰ χειρόγραφα τῶν Μετεώρων 1, 1992, p. 555). Additionally there is a probable witness of the *Narratio Iosephi Rescripta* in a manuscript in the ms. Athous Karakallou 87 (1600) (XVIIIth c.); I owe this last indication to Antonio Rigo (Università Ca'Foscari, Venice).

4. In order to make this a valid comparison, I will set aside the multiple ancient translations of the *Acts of Pilate* which furnish precious clues as to the evolution of the Greek text in addition to the preserved Greek manuscripts; on this issue, cf. proceedings from the *Workshop Editing the Acts of Pilate in Early Christian Languages. Theory and Practice* (Winnipeg, October 3-5, 2010), compiled in *Apocrypha* 21, 2010, p. 9-176.

so, I will emphasize some methodological concerns that arise from the whole project.

A Fluid Tradition

After it was composed somewhere between 320 and 380,[5] the *Acts of Pilate* underwent a significant series of revisions. As the extant title seems not to be coherent with the narrative, the original text may have first circulated without a title or with a title now lost, and with a prologue. It received the title "Memoirs of Our Lord Jesus the Christ, composed under Pontius Pilate" sometime before 387. A postface with a colophon was added to the end of the text sometime after 425. It was then moved and inserted between the title and the prologue, thus becoming a preface.[6] Did the copyists who undertook these modifications revise other parts of the text? It is not impossible. What is certain, however, is that the Greek manuscript tradition of the *Acts of Pilate*, which is on the whole a later tradition,[7] exhibits numerous variations in its details. Two types of textual practices may account for this: (a) abbreviations and abridgements (intentional or accidental), and (b) amplifications or revisions, frequently combined with vertical contamination (the effect of which is that late manuscripts can contain very ancient variants).

Traces of Editorial Intervention

One can find numerous traces of accidental modifications—resulting from transliteration,[8] confusion between sounds and handwritings,[9]

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5. Cf. footnote 2.

6. For more details on all these issues, cf. R. Gounelle, "Un nouvel évangile judéo-chrétien", *op. cit.* The testimony of Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 50.1.5-8, on the use of some "Acts of Pilate" by Quartodecimans is generally used to prove that the text was variable as early as 380—cf. notably J.-D. Dubois, "L'utilisation des *Actes de Pilate* au quatrième siècle", *Apocrypha* 2, 1991, p. 85-98—but it is uncertain whether the heresiologue is referring to the surviving *Acts of Pilate,* as neither the title nor the variants quoted by Epiphanius are attested in the manuscripts of the surviving text—cf. R. Gounelle, "Un nouvel évangile judéo-chrétien", *op. cit.*

7. The oldest preserved manuscript dates to the XIIth century. Cf. C. Furrer, *op. cit.*

8. Thus the confusion between ἔτι and ἐπί (Prologue, 14.1, 14.2), τόμῳ and τόπῳ (16.1.2 [XVI.2]). The vast majority of such misreadings occur among all the Greek witnesses.

9. Hesitation between aorist verb forms of καλέω, "to call" and κελεύω, "to order" (ἐκέλευσας as opposed to ἐκάλεσας, ἐκέλευσεν as opposed to ἐκάλεσεν) likely belong in this category (cf. 1.2, 2.6).

corruption,[10] and homoioteleuta (skipping lines to an identical word)[11]—as well as other modifications that are likely due to the evolution of the Greek language.[12] In addition to these, there are other corrections in the Greek manuscripts of the *Acts of Pilate,* which are more likely the result of intentional revision on the part of copyists attempting to modify the content or form of the text.

Such variants are often found both in the syntax and the vocabulary. As for the syntax, the sentence structure of the *Acts of Pilate* has often been simplified,[13] as unwieldy expressions have been reworked here and there to render the text more fluid.[14] The changes in vocabulary are more difficult to explain. For example, why is the piece of cloth which Pilate's messenger spreads out under Jesus' feet (1.2) referred to as both φακιόλιον (or φακεώλιον) and καθάπλωμα, depending on the *codices*, without any coherence among the manuscripts on this point?[15] The alternation in some manuscripts between κῆπος ("garden") and οἶκος ("house") to designate the place where the leaders of the Jews sit (15.5) is equally surprising.[16]

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10. Thus, in 16.1.3 [XVI.3], several manuscripts read with variant details: λέγει αὐτῷ τὸ συνέδριον· Ἄρα Λευὶ ἀληθές ἐστιν τὸ ῥῆμα ὃ ἐλάλησας; ("The Sanhedrin said to him: 'So Levi, is the word that you spoke true?'") while others have: λέγει τὸ συνέδριον τῷ ῥαββὶ Λευί· ἀληθές ἐστιν τὸ ῥῆμα ὃ ἐλάλησας; ("The Sanhedrin said to Rabbi Levi: 'Is the word that you spoke true?'") There is every reason to believe that ῥαββὶ Λευί was originally the complement of λέγει (as is clearly the case in Armenian and certain Latin manuscripts) and that the interrogative ἄρα is the result of a corruption of ῥαββί.

11. The numerous homoioteleuta found in all the witnesses are due to the highly repetitive character of the narrative, where nearly identical expressions are often placed a few lines apart.

12. Such as the difficulty with certain verb forms (cf. the diverse forms of κάμπτω "to bend", in 1.5: ἐκάμφθησαν, ἐκάνθησαν, ἐκαύθησαν, ἔκαμψαν), replacement of datives with genitives, hesitation on augments, sporadic presence of nominative absolutes, the presence of late noun and verb forms etc. In some manuscripts there are, here and there, some archaic forms, like optatives, testifying to the tendency of certain copyists to restore a purer form of Greek. If these linguistic phenomena are relatively easy to identify, they are more difficult to date with any degree of precision, and thus offer little information on the transmission history of the *Acts of Pilate*.

13. Thus in 1.2, the modification from ἀχθήτω ὁ Ἰησοῦς ("let Jesus be brought") to ἄρῃ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ("Bring Jesus") in some witnesses.

14. Thus in 15.6, in the majority of the Greek witnesses, water comes down "from (ἀπό or ἐκ) the head to the feet". Some manuscripts employ the less obvious expression, which seems more primitive: "on (ἐπάνω or ἐπί) the head to the feet". These two forms of the text have parallels in the ancient versions.

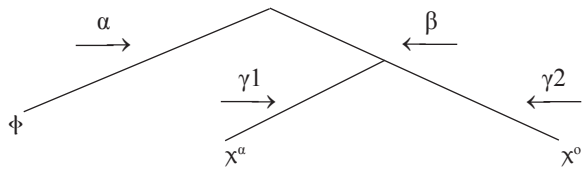
15. Φακιόλιον or φακεώλιον is certainly the older of the two.

16. The choice of the majority, reinforced by the Coptic and by a Latin version, οἶκος seems to be the *lectio facilior*, as opposed to κῆπος, which is employed by the witnesses of the family Φ (see *infra*), and which is confirmed in the two Armenian versions, in Georgian and in a Latin version.

Layers of Revision

Due to its fluidity and instability, the manuscript tradition allows us neither to situate such modifications in the text history with any great degree of precision, nor to arrange them chronologically. Several layers of revision have nevertheless been identified. These layers, or at least the oldest ones, likely constitute successive groups of modifications, having been implemented by more than one copyist. This is in any case what a comparison between the *codices extrauagantes*[17] and the ancient translations of the text would suggest. Such a series of modifications represents periods of significant evolution of the text, rather than a contribution of a single writer implementing a coherent agenda.

The identification of these layers is the reason for distinguishing two textual families, designated by the abbreviations ϕ and χ and, within the family χ, subgroups χ^{α} and χ^{o}. This distinction between the textual forms can be represented by the following stemma which is intended to serve only as an illustration. The layers of editorial intervention are designated by the Greek lower case:



It would be overly simplistic to summarize the history of the *Acts of Pilate* with only these layers of revision, as is evident from various modifications that cannot be attributed to the writers α, β, γ1 or γ2.

For example, to designate the place where Jesus was buried (cf. 12.1, 14.3 and 15.6), some Greek witnesses use μνημεῖον ("tomb") and others use σπήλαιον ("cave"). No manuscript is consistent on this point. But in each occurrence some of the witnesses use σπήλαιον, which is at times corroborated by the Coptic version—an indication that would support its ancient origin. It is possible that the primitive text of the *Acts of Pilate* used σπήλαιον everywhere, but that it was later corrected to be consistent with the New Testament. In any case it is difficult to imagine why Byzantine copyists would replace μνημεῖον with σπήλαιον. Yet it is not possible to determine if these corrections were implemented by a single copyist at a particular moment in the history of the work's transmission or if they were made by several copyists at different stages. Thus the incoherent character of the preserved manuscripts can be attributed either to the non-systematic manner in which corrections were carried out at some point in the textual tradition, or to

17. On these *codices,* cf. infra.

the contamination of both ancient and recent forms of the text, or to a combination of both phenomena.

Another passage (1.2) preserves three equivalent and concurrent terms. While in the family ϕ, as well as in several indirect Greek witnesses and in most of the other versions, the messenger simply says to Jesus "enter" (εἴσελθε), some other manuscripts add either "in the praetorium" (ἐν τῷ πραιτωρίῳ or εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον) or "on the tribunal" (ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος). These variants have also resurfaced in Syriac and in some Latin witnesses. It is possible that they reflect independent efforts to provide a complement for the imperative "enter", but the groups of manuscripts that have these variants contain parallels in other passages as well. This could indicate that the additions in question were implemented by a single writer who intervened in several passages. But given that these modifications are only details, it is difficult to come to a clear conclusion on this point.

Some classical philologists would consider such variants to be unimportant details. And indeed, they do not fundamentally modify the meaning of the narrative. Proponents of the "New Philology", however, would place particular importance on such details even while their origin remains obscure[18] and their "raison d'être" is not easy to determine.

Editorial Choices

Handling such a versatile and elusive tradition within the constraints of a critical edition is anything but easy. The reconstitution of a primitive version of the *Acts of Pilate*—attempted by several editors of the 19th century[19]—is out of the question. The enterprise would not only be risky, but its outcome would inevitably be a deformed summary of what is actually a rich manuscript tradition ; that richness illustrates the vitality of the *Acts of Pilate* and of its interpretation throughout the centuries. A diplomatic edition of one or several manuscripts, as certain adherents to the "New Philology" would likely propose, would be no more desirable : such an edition would necessarily give undue preference to one or several witnesses at the expense of others, based on rather arbitrary criteria, given the current state of the manuscript tradition.

And yet, if the manuscript tradition presents such a fundamentally unstable text, it would be impractical to give the reader direct access to such an anarchic proliferation of readings. Indeed, editors have a

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18. As mentioned above, some of the modifications likely took place at a very early date, but that does not prove that they are in any way connected to the modifications made to the title and to the addition of the postface/preface.

19. Cf. particularly the still commonly used edition by C. von Tischendorf, *Evangelia apocrypha, adhibitis plurimis codicibus Graecis et Latinis maximam partem nunc primum consultis atque ineditorum copia insignibus*, 2nd ed. rev. Leipzig, 1876 (1853[1] ; reprinted : Hildesheim, 1966), p. 210-286.

responsibility to organize and interpret this complex manuscript tradition in order to make it more accessible to other scholars. On this point, the editors of the *Acts of Pilate* differ from certain currents of "New Philology" in that they return to a fundamental aspect of classical philology. They nevertheless distance themselves from the latter by avoiding flights of philological fancy and strictly adhering the manuscript tradition itself.

The editorial choices proceed from the partition of the manuscripts into three different categories: first, the witnesses that transmit a similar text are grouped into families (in this case ϕ and χ); second, the manuscripts which cannot be grouped into families constitute the *codices extrauagantes*; and third, the manuscripts that contain quotes from the *Acts of Pilate*,[20] constitute 'indirect witnesses'.

The Witnesses Belonging to Families

The witnesses belonging to the two main families could form the basis of a classical critical edition. Using the Lachmannian method, one could reconstitute, on the basis of these witnesses, the sort of texts that likely circulated in Byzantine Christianity. The manuscripts from the family ϕ are often incomplete; therefore it would not be possible to reconstitute an archetype without being eclectic. As for the family χ, any attempt to reconstitute an archetype would be rather hazardous;[21] therefore the editors have focused instead on a sub-archetype of the family χ (χ^o). The reconstituted texts of the ancestor of ϕ and of χ^o are to be published synoptically with the standard critical apparatuses, allowing both an enumeration of the un-edited variants as well as a justification for the reconstituted texts. The planned edition of these texts is moderately eclectic; it refers to the various witnesses in order to access the most primitive form of the text possible. The text is also standardized, but only when necessary.[22] When non-classical forms are found in most of the manuscripts, the editors preserve them as witnesses of the Greek language as it was spoken and/or written at the time of the redaction of the edited text.

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20. In this category belong several witnesses of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Pseudo Germanus of Constantinople and the *Narratio Iosephi rescripta* (cf. C. Furrer, *op. cit.*, p. 15-16), to which we add a homily on Longinos attributed to Hesychius of Jerusalem (cf. M. Aubineau, *Les homélies festales d'Hésychius de Jérusalem* II, Brussels, Société des Bollandistes, Subsidia Hagiographica 59, 1980, p. 858-859).

21. In the cases where (inexplicably, except by fortuitous coincidence or by contamination) χ^α and χ^o are both in agreement with ϕ, the reconstitution of the archetype of χ is impossible within the rules of classical philology.

22. This is particularly the case with proper names where spelling is standardized. However, spelling variants of these names are all indicated in the apparatus.

A real difficulty arises in cases where all of the witnesses that are being used in the critical edition appear to contain a corrupted text—as is often the case in χ°. When an incomprehensible text occurs in an identical or similar manner in all the preserved witnesses, it is possible to postulate that the copyists did not find it altogether incomprehensible. At least such an explanation allows us to account for the preservation of the text in its current state, without modification. In such cases, the critical edition preserves the text and thereby may be seen as not 'critical' in the traditional sense. Thus at the end of the prologue, the edition of χ° reads: ὅσα μετὰ τὸν σταυρὸν καὶ τὸ πάθος τοῦ κυρίου γράμμασιν ἑβραικοῖς ἱστορίαις Νικοδήμου ἔγραψεν,[23] even though ἔγραψεν has no subject.

The edition makes it possible to identify the different layers of editorial revisions by the scribes mentioned above. The differences between ϕ and χ° emerge from a simple comparison of the edited texts, though it is not possible to attribute the differences either to γ1 or γ2.[24]

The codices extrauagantes

As for the *codices extrauagantes*, which present isolated forms of the text, it is virtually impossible to organize the chaos. They sporadically contain very ancient forms of the *Acts of Pilate*; in some ways they are closer to ϕ, but in other ways closer to χ—in fact, they evidence forms of the text that are largely more primitive than either of the edited forms. It makes no sense to try to include them in the apparatus of either of the textual families. The editors have preferred to merge them into a separate apparatus called the "textual apparatus".

In this section there is no critical philological perspective; the variants of the *codices extrauagantes* are simply enumerated, and the Greek variants are keyed to the principal variants in the ancient translations of the text, where appropriate. For reasons of practical organization, the text of the *codices extrauagantes* and the ancient translations are presented as an apparatus whose lemmas follow ϕ.[25]

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23. The manuscript W is lacking here. It contains only ἱστορί<>νικοδήμ<> W. The accent on the last word excludes that it might have read ἱστορήσας Νικόδημος as AM does, and implies that before being corrupted it likely contained ἱστορίαις Νικοδήμου, as do O and Q.

24. The divergences between them are identifiable through the critical apparatus of the χ recension; a system of asterisks identifies, whenever possible, the interventions of γ1 and γ2. An asterisk placed on χ^{AM} signifies agreement between ϕ and χ^{AM} and thus an editorial intervention on the level of γ2—which is the most frequent case. In the same way agreement between ϕ and χ° indicates an intervention at the level of γ1. When χ^{α} and χ° both agree with the witnesses of ϕ, asterisks are placed on each.

25. On this issue, cf. R. GOUNELLE, "L'édition de la recension grecque ancienne des *Actes de Pilate*. Perspectives méthodologiques", *Apocrypha* 21, 2010 (publ. 2011), p. 31-47.

This textual apparatus is far more important than the critical apparatuses of ϕ and χ. It actually allows the reader to enter the dynamic process of evolution of the *Acts of Pilate*; the *codices extrauagantes* demonstrate the intrinsic instability of the text beyond what the critical edition of the two Byzantine forms reveals.[26]

The Indirect Witnesses

The indirect witnesses to the *Acts of Pilate* present a slightly different scenario. Even though most of them, like the *codices extrauagantes*, evidence a text that is largely older than the two edited families, they are not autonomous. Rather, these witnesses are discrete sections of the *Acts of Pilate* that have been integrated into another narrative (*Narratio Iosephi rescripta*, Homily on Longinos) or explicative texts (*Historia Ecclesiastica* of Pseudo Germanus of Constantinople).

Unlike the witnesses presented up to this point, the indirect witnesses interest the editor less for what they are than for what they testify to; they represent states of the text that have largely disappeared elsewhere, but that have had repercussions in the Byzantine world. For this reason, only the sections of these witnesses that actually illustrate the textual history of the *Acts of Pilate* are quoted in the edition. The passages belonging only to these documents are not used, even if they occur between the quotations of the *Acts of Pilate*. The proponents of the "New Philology" will have reason to protest the violation of the integrity of such important documents; nevertheless, reason must prevail on this point. The edition in question concerns the *Acts of Pilate* and not all of the documents that quote or use it. The editors of this text reserve the right to refer to indirect witnesses on a utilitarian basis, even as they would wish them to one day become the object of separate critical editions and in-depth analyses.[27]

To avoid any confusion between these indirect witnesses and the manuscripts of the *Acts of Pilate*, there is a separate apparatus dedicated to the variants of the *Narratio Iosephi rescripta*, to the homily on Longinos, and to the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Pseudo Germanus of Constantinople. This apparatus follows the reconstructed text of χ^{o},

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26. Bold characters in the textual apparatus identify sporadically the variants that trace back to a very ancient layer of the text—the *textus antiquissimus*—but in the majority of the cases the reader finds a list of variants with no possibility of giving priority to one over another.

27. The Homily of Pseudo-Hesychius alone, mentioned below, has already been published (cf. *supra*). A critical edition of the *Narratio Iosephi rescripta* is being prepared by G. Aragione (Université de Strasbourg). As for the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Pseudo Germanus of Constantinople, it has a rich tradition in Greek and in Slav (cf. R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie, du VII^e^ au XV^e^ siècle*, Paris, Archives de l'Orient chrétien, 9, 1966), in which only a tiny part appears to quote the *Acts of Pilate*; I am not aware of any other editing projects for the different forms of this text.

to which the indirect witnesses are similar in many respects. All of the variants of concerned sections are indicated therein, even those that can be explained by their larger context. Thus developments that are specific to these works are cited on the condition that they are found in relevant sections of the *Acts of Pilate*.

Evaluation

In the foregoing I have showed how the planned edition of the *Acts of Pilate* complements a classical philological perspective. It presents two reconstituted and standardized texts based on various manuscripts, accompanied by their respective critical apparatus. They respond to the demands of the "New Philology" as they present the abundant variety within the manuscripts, both at the level of content and wording. For the sake of the reader, the project as a whole is rendered in a way that is, at the same time, chaotic yet orderly—a blend that makes the edition of the *Acts of Pilate* an original enterprise.

As previously indicated, these editorial choices have been largely imposed by the state of the manuscript tradition, as other more classical solutions have proven unusable.[28] But chance sometimes turns out quite well; by their differences, the two edited texts φ and χ reflect, for the most part, both the linguistic evolution of the text and the evolving dynamics of the manuscript tradition as a whole. For instance, in the passage mentioned above where the messenger introduces Jesus into the praetorium (1.2), the edited text of φ reads "enter" (εἴσελθε) while χ^{o} reads: "enter into the praetorium" (εἴσελθε εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον). In the same paragraph of both of the edited texts, the two terms φακιόλιον and καθάπλωμα are present, both designating the piece of cloth that Pilate's messenger spreads out under the feet of Jesus. Likewise in 15.5, φ and χ use different words to designate the place where the rulers of the Jews sit; one uses κῆπος ("garden"), and the other οἶκος ("house").

The differences between the two edited families are not limited to matters of detail. The edition of chapter 9 (IX.5), devoted to the sentence of Pilate,[29] illustrates how the reader can generally recognize the text's transformative dynamic based on the two edited texts, even without getting into the textual apparatus (see the appendix):

(a) In φ, the sentence is composed of two different elements: the formulation of the charge addressed directly to Jesus, and then the sentence proper where Jesus is referred to in the third person; in χ^{o}, the entire statement is addressed to Jesus.[30] So the addressee was clearly a variable aspect of this passage.

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28. Cf. R. Gounelle, "L'édition de la recension grecque ancienne des *Actes de Pilate*", *op. cit*.

29. Cf. Annex.

30. The attentive reader will note that the process is largely underway at the level of β, and traces back even earlier, since some manuscripts of φ omit the pronoun αὐτόν.

(b) The sentence is identified by a subtitle in ϕ but not in χ^{o}.
(c) The style of the sentence is of a more enumerative character in ϕ than in χ^{o}.[31]
(d) As for content, the flagellation is associated with the "laws of pious kings/emperors" in ϕ, but only to an "imperial/royal law" in χ^{o}. And the thieves crucified with Jesus, who are anonymous in ϕ, are named in χ^{o} and emphasized by the structure of the sentence.

The reader who refers to the critical apparatus in chapter 9 will find the same processes at work. With the exception of variations on the law, all the other modifications identified by a comparison of the two synoptically edited families are also present in the *codices extrauagantes*.

Other examples could be furnished, but I will add here only the issue raised by the beginning of the narrative. Here also, the two edited forms of the text demonstrate two narratives with two distinct profiles. In family ϕ, the *Acts of Pilate* carries the title: Ὑπομνήματα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πραχθέντα ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, "Memoires of our Lord Jesus Christ Composed under Pontius Pilate". This is followed by a preface in which Ananias recounts how he discovered and translated this narrative, and then by a prologue that dates the writing of the text by Nicodemus. In χ^{o}, the narrative is attributed to Nicodemus in the title: Ὑπομνήματα περὶ τὰ πραχθέντα εἰς τὸν κυρίον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου συγγραφέντα ὑπὸ Νικοδήμου ἄρχοντος τῆς συναγωγῆς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, "Memoires Concerning What Happened to our Lord Jesus Christ under Pontius Pilate, Written by Nicodemus, the Leader of the Synagogue of the Jews". This is followed by a prologue that dates the writing of the text by Nicodemus. The most important variant of this title—the attribution of πραχθέντα either to "Memoires" (ὑπομνήματα) or to its subject—is equally attested in the critical apparatus.

These examples demonstrate how the synoptic edition of the two textual families of the Byzantine period allows the attentive reader to satisfactorily identify the textual dynamics of the Greek *Acts of Pilate*, even if what is available represents only the tip of an iceberg. Of course, not all the variants are found in the divergences between the two edited families—just as the variation between μνημεῖον and σπήλαιον becomes evident only in the critical apparatus.[32] But the two

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31. ϕ reads: πρῶτον φραγελοῦσθαι … καὶ τότε ἀναρτᾶσθαι. χ^{α} (= χ^{AM}) reads: πρῶτον φραγελλοῦσθαι ἔπειτα ἀναρτᾶσθαι, while χ^{o} has: πρὸ φραγγελωθῆναι ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀναρτᾶσθαι. The writer β probably modified καὶ τότε into ἔπειτα. The ensuing transformation of the text, at the level of γ2, is explained as the corruption of the words πρῶτον, which became πρὸ τοῦ or πρὸ, and ἔπειτα which became ἐπί.

32. The same is true for the variant mentioned in footnote 8.

edited texts do grant the reader entry into a large portion of the textual history of the *Acts of Pilate* without locking the text into a single form.

In this way, the planned edition of the *Acts of Pilate* fulfils a central requirement of the "New Philology" without abandoning the merits of classical philology. At the risk of seeming provocative, one might even wonder if it is necessary to do any better. An electronic edition, however, could be helpful on several levels. It would enable a visualization of manuscript photos and collations of the *codices extrauagantes* (and the indirect witnesses) and, in the process, would more easily demonstrate their substantive coherence than does the textual apparatus. In the same way, using photographs of manuscripts would allow a better understanding of textual phenomena such as barely readable abbreviations, ambiguous notations, and material lacunae. But who could really benefit from such resources and exploit them outside of the specialists in the *Acts of Pilate*? Who would know how to interpret them in light of the whole manuscript tradition? For lack of the ability to contextualize the information in such an eminently complex tradition, there is a real danger that users would be lost at best, and led to erroneous assessment at worst.

Other Unresolved Issues

If the editorial choices described above allow one to go beyond the limits of a classical edition of the text, they do not satisfactorily resolve one important problem, that of the end of the text.

The association of the Acts of Pilate with other texts

In its present state, the edition of the *Acts of Pilate* currently being prepared for publication in the *Series Apocryphorum* of the *Corpus Christianorum* is based on the delimitation of the text inherited from the philology of the 19th century. The narrative ends with a hymn sung by the Jewish people before everyone goes home (16.4). But this is not the ending in most manuscripts. On the one hand, only six of the sixteen manuscripts contain the final hymn; the others transmit a shorter text—sometimes due to voluntary abridgments, as in χ^{o}, sometimes due to the loss of folios. On the other hand, in nearly two thirds of the manuscripts, the text is followed by another text. In eight *codices*, the correspondence of Pilate and the emperor (*Anaphora Pilatou* and *Paradosis Pilatou*[33]) immediately follows the *Acts of Pilate*. This is also the

33. C. Furrer, *op. cit.*, p. 30, provides a survey of the manuscripts of the *Acts of Pilate* containing the *Anaphora* and the *Paradosis*, but the list does not coincide exactly with the list of manuscripts given in the note 33: there is also the mention, p. 13, of the *Anaphora* and the *Paradosis* in the description of the Manuscript I. The edition of C. von Tischendorf implies that the *Anaphora* and the *Paradosis* are two independent texts. In reality, they form a

case in several manuscripts of the family ϕ, in all the witnesses of χ and in one *codex extrauagans*. But in one witness of ϕ and one *codex extrauagans* it is followed by the *Declaration of Joseph of Arimathaea (Narratio Iosephi*), which is in turn followed by the *Epistula Pilati ad Herodum*.[34]

Not only do the majority of the manuscripts of the *Acts of Pilate* include other texts relative to Pilate, but this phenomenon has also had consequences for the text history itself. For example, in the manuscript Paris, BnF gr. 929 (which is referred to as E in the upcoming edition of the *Acts of Pilate*), the *Anaphora Pilati* and the *Paradosis Pilati* are inserted in the text of the *Acts of Pilate* itself, after the prologue. It is clearly an intentional insertion, because the title given to the narrative explicitly presents the "Memoires of our Lord Jesus Christ" (the traditional title of the *Acts of Pilate*) as a report that Pilate sends to the emperor (the traditional title of the *Anaphora Pilati*).[35] The text that we have entitled *Narratio Iosephi Rescripta*, for its part, fuses the *Acts of Pilate* with the *Declaration of Joseph of Arimathaea* and with another source that has not been identified.[36] The association of the *Acts of Pilate* with these texts is thus an intrinsic element of its history.

Editorial Issues

The editorial choices presented above allow the edition to indicate the existence of both the long forms of the *Acts of Pilate*—which extend the text all the way to the final hymn (16.4)—and the shorter forms, thanks to the text χ^{o}. But they are unable to account for the constitution of a cycle surrounding the figure of Pilate in Byzantine Christianity.

Yet the presence of the *Anaphora Pilati* and the *Paradosis Pilati* in all the manuscripts of the family χ suggests that this cycle is an

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homogenous textual ensemble in the manuscripts; there is no problem of continuity in the vast majority of the manuscripts containing the two narratives. These texts, which are being critically edited by G. Aragione (Université de Strasbourg), represent a rich tradition, which has not yet been studied in detail; a first account has been given by A.-C. Baudouin, "Témoins manuscrits connus et inconnus du *Rapport de Pilate à Tibère* (CANT 65 and 66)", *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* 54, 2008, p. 183-20. They have been translated by R. Gounelle, "*Rapport de Pilate, Réponse de Tibère à Pilate, Comparution de Pilate*", in J.-D. Kaestli et P. Geoltrain (dir.), *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens* II, Paris, Bibliothèque de la Pléïade 516, 2005, p. 299-327.

34. Cf. C. Furrer, *op. cit.*, p. 12-13. On this *Declaration*, of which a new edition by G. Aragione (Université de Strasbourg) is underway, cf. A. Frey-B. Outtier, "Déclaration de Joseph d'Arimathée", in J.-D. Kaestli and P. Geoltrain (dir.), *op. cit.*, p. 331-354.

35. Cf. C. Furrer, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

36. Concerning this text cf. R. Gounelle, *Les recensions byzantines de l'Évangile de Nicodème*, *op. cit.*, p. 52-53.

integral part of the process leading to the development of this family—or rather, that it was constituted by writer β. All the witnesses of this family abridge the end of the text, preserving only the following lines from the chapters 16.3.2 (XVI.7) and 16.4 (XVI.8): "Anna and Caiaphas said: 'You have rightly spoken what is written in the law of Moses, but it is better for us to be silent concerning the rest and for each one to go to his house. And give glory to God". It is likely that, given the evolution of the *Acts of Pilate* in other textual traditions,[37] the abridgement of the chapter 16 and the extension of the narrative with the help of other texts are two related phenomena. If such is the case, it would be questionable at the very least to edit the short text without the *Anaphora*.

It is therefore important that the edition of the *Acts of Pilate* itself reflects this merging of several texts beyond a simple mention in the introductory description of the manuscripts of family χ. But how can we do this without directly editing, after the *Acts of Pilate* itself, the form of the *Anaphora Pilati* and the *Paradosis Pilati* found in family χ? This, in turn, would imply adding to the critical and textual apparatus of both families the other textual extensions found in some manuscripts of ϕ and in some of the *codices extrauagantes*.[38]

Such an undertaking would provide information of great interest on the history of the texts relative to Pilate, helping to establish whether the modifications made to the various editorial layers of the *Acts of Pilate* have parallels in other associated texts. But it would also require penetrating deeply into the textual tradition of the *Anaphora Pilati*, the *Paradosis Pilati*, and the *Declaration of Joseph of Arimathaea*, and would consequently take on such dimensions as to discourage any textual editor—not to mention that it would partially repeat the work of G. Aragione, who is currently preparing an edition of these texts for the *Series Apocryphorum* of the *Corpus Christianorum*.

A digital approach to organizing the identified material with the help of several different research teams could offer some interesting solutions. Such an approach would enable the user to reconstitute the sequences of text from one editorial layer, revealing the coherence or structure of a collection of documents from several different manuscripts. In the case at hand, a combination of the information provided by G. Aragione with that provided by the *Acts of Pilate* research team could identify the constitution of a cycle of Pilate in Byzantine literature. Such collaboration could also resolve some of the problems

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37. Cf. particularly the expansions of the text in the Latin world. Cf. Z. Izydorczyk, "The *Evangelium Nicodemi* in the Latin Middle Ages", in Z. Izydorczyk (ed.), *The Medieval Gospel of Nicodemus*, Tempe (AZ), Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 158, 1997, p. 44-101 (46-66).

38. Not to mention a similar operation in the other textual traditions that will be edited in the CCSA (Armenian, Georgian, etc.).

mentioned above concerning the indirect witnesses. Once the latter are edited, one could potentially have access to the context of certain quotations in the textual apparatus of χ^{o} from within the edition of the *Acts of Pilate*. Is this a historian's fantasy or a future possibility? Only time will tell.

Conclusion

If the current editorial project does not satisfactorily account for the insertion of the *Acts of Pilate* into a collection of texts that can be identified, by and large, as a coherent corpus, it should nevertheless be able to satisfy two contradictory needs: first, it presents in a logical fashion a rich textual tradition by reconstituting two textual forms that circulated in Byzantine Christianity. Secondly, the specific textual apparatus allows access to other preserved textual forms—a chaos of information impossible to organize otherwise—and thereby gives access to the fabrication of the text.

As this editing project limits itself to the preserved manuscript tradition, we feel that it satisfies the legitimate concerns of the "New Philology" about the classical method without abandoning the precious tools developed by the latter. It remains to be seen whether such an edition will be understandable and useful to its users. The risk is that the reader, surprised by its complexity, might abandon it entirely and resort to C. von Tischendorf's edition.[39] While the risk is real, we must continue to seek innovative strategies to faithfully represent rich and fluid textual traditions.

39. C. von Tischendorf, *op. cit.*

Appendix

Text of ϕ

9 Τότε ἐκέλευσεν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸ βῆλον ἑλκυσθῆναι ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος οὗ
ἐκαθέζετο καὶ οὕτως ἀπεφήνατο κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ·
{Ἀπόφασις Πιλάτου}
— Τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν κατέπαιξάν σου ὡς βασιλέως. Διὰ τοῦτο
ἀπεφηνάμην πρῶτον φραγελοῦσθαι αὐτὸν διὰ τῶν θεσμῶν τῶν εὐσεβῶν
βασιλέων καὶ τότε ἀναρτᾶσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ ὅπου
ἐπιάσθη καὶ δύο κακούργους σὺν αὐτῷ.

Critical apparatus

FGHCZ

1 τὸ βῆλον Z: ζῆλον F τὸν βίβλον C om. GH | ἐπὶ GHC: ἐκ Z om. F | **2** post Ἰησοῦ add. λέγων G λέγει H | **3** Ἀπόφασις Πιλάτου C: ἀπόφασις πιλάτου κατὰ τοῦ ἰησοῦ Z om. GH | **4** τὸ σὸν GHCZ: αὐτοῦ F | σου GZ: σε HC αὐτῷ F | βασιλέως F: βασιλεῖ GHC βασιλέα Z | **4-5** ante Διὰ τοῦτο add. καὶ FZ | ἀπεφηνάμην FGZ: ἀφηνάμην C ἀπεμεινάμην H | **5** πρῶτον FGHC: πρὸ τοῦ Z cf. χ | φραγελοῦσθαι FGHZ: φραγελλοῦσθαι C | αὐτὸν om. C | εὐσεβῶν GHZ: ἀσεβῶν C om. F | **6** ἀναρτᾶσθαι FGHZ: ἀρτᾶσθαι C | αὐτὸν om. FH | ἐπὶ τοῦ (om. H) σταυροῦ FHCZ: ἐπὶ τὸν σταυρὸν G | **7** ἐπιάσθη FGCZ: ἐκρατήθη H | κακούργους GHZ: κακοῦργοι FC

Textual apparatus

Variae lectiones codicum IJBN et loci ad editionem pertinentes ex *arm cop geo syr lat*

1 Τότε ἐκέλευσεν ὁ Πιλάτος IJ: καὶ ἐκέλευσεν ὁ πιλάτος B ἐκέλευσεν δὲ ὁ πιλάτος N | τὸ βῆλον ἑλκυσῆθναι (ἑλκ. τ. β. BN) IJBN ut ϕ^{Z} χ cf. ϕ^{FC} *arm*^{a110} *cop geo latB1*$^{284,\ 900}$ *syr*: om. IJ ut ϕ^{GH} | ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος B: τοῦ βήματος IJ om. N | ἐκαθέζετο IBN: ἐκάθητο J | **2** καὶ οὕτως ἀπεφήνατο κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ FIJ cf. *arm*^{a} *cop syr latA latB1 latC*: καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ B cf. χ *arm*^{s} *geo*^{r} *latB2d* om. IJB *geo* | Ἀπόφασις Πιλάτου : ἀπόφασις κατὰ τοῦ ἰησοῦ N titulum habent etiam ϕ^{CZ} *cop geo latB1*^{336} cf. *latA* | κατέπαιξάν σου I: κατέπταιξάν σου J κατέπλεξέ σε N κατήγγειλάν σου B cf. χ | βασιλέως J: βασιλεῖ B βασιλέα (-λα I) IN | post βασιλέως add. αὐτῶν J | **4** ante Διὰ τοῦτο add. καὶ IJ | **5** ante ἀπεφηνάμην add. ἀνεγκασθεὶς J | post ἀπεφηνάμην add. κατὰ σοῦ B κατὰ σοῦ. κελεύω οὖν N | πρῶτον φραγελοῦσθαι αὐτὸν *geo latB*$^{198,\ 336}$ *latC*: πρῶτον φραγελοῦσθαι (φραγελλωθῆναι IJ) σε IJB *cop latA*^{rr} *syr* αὐτὸν πρῶτον φραγελλοῦσθαι N | εὐσεβῶν IJB *arm*^{s} *syr* cf. *arm*^{a}: εὐσεβεστάτων N | **6** ἀναρτᾶσθαι αὐτὸν N *arm*^{s} *cop geo latA*^{rr} *latB*$^{198,\ 336}$: ἀναρτᾶσθαί σε B *arm*^{a} *syr* ἀναρτηθέντα σε IJ | ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ BN: ἐπὶ σταυροῦ I om. J | **6-7** ὅπου ἐπιάσθη *latA latB1 latC*: ὅπου ἐπιάσθης IJB ut χ *cop latA*^{179} om. N | καὶ δύο κακούργους σὺν αὐτῷ: καὶ δύο κακοῦργοι σὺν αὐτῷ B ut ϕ^{FC} ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τοὺς δύο κακούργους σὺν αὐτῷ N καὶ δύο κακούργους μετὰ σοῦ τὸ πέρας τοῦ βίου δέξασθαι IJ | post αὐτῷ add. ὁ εἷς λεγόμενος Δυσμᾶς καὶ ὁ ἕτερος Γέστας B Γέσταν καὶ Δυσμᾶν N *latA latB1* cf. χ *arm*^{r} *cop latB2 latC syr*

Text of χ^{oqw}

9 Τότε ἐκέλευσεν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸ βῆλον ἑλκυσθῆναι τοῦ βήματος οὗ
ἐκαθέζετο καὶ ἀπεφήνατο ἀπόφασιν καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ·

—Τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν κατελάλησέ σε ὡς βασιλέα καὶ ἀπεφήναμέν σε
ἄλλα πρὸ φραγγελωθῆναι διὰ τὸν θεσμὸν τὸν βασιλικὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ
ἀναρτᾶσθαί σε ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ ὅπου ἐπιάσθης καὶ
Δυσμᾶς καὶ Γευστᾶς οἱ δύο κακοῦργοι συσταυρωθήτωσάν σοι.

Critical apparatus

OQWAM

1 τὸ OQM : τὸν WA | **2** ἐκαθέζετο OQA : καθέζετο M ἐκάθετο W | ἀπόφασιν om. AM | καὶ λέγει OQW : λέγων AM | **3** κατελάλησέ OQW : κατήλεγξέ AM | σε OQAM : σου W | post καὶ add. διὰ τοῦτο AM* | ἀπεφήναμέν σε OQW : ἀπεφήναμην AM* | ἄλλα πρὸ (τοῦ add. W) φραγγελωθῆναι OQW : ἀλλὰ (om. A) πρῶτον φραγελλοῦσθαι (σε add. A) AM* | **4-5** ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀναρτᾶσθαί σε OQ : ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀναρτασάσθαι W ἔπειτα ἀναρτᾶσθαι AM | **5** τοῦ om. AM | ἐν τῷ κήπῳ ὅπου ἐπιάσθης om. W | ἐν OQ* : ἐπὶ AM | ante Δυσμᾶς add. ὁ W | Δυσμᾶς W : δυσμὰς O : δὺσμὰς Q δύσμαν M | Γευστᾶς W : γευστὰς OQ στέγας A στέγαν M